

The Great Flood

Re-visited

A few months ago, I wrote a reflection on Mount Ararat and the story of the great flood. It will come as no surprise that in this series of reflections on the theme of 'water', I return to the great flood.



Floods can be devastating; the human cost can be high and there is nothing higher than the cost of lives. Some reading this may have memories of floods and the power of water as it forces its way across the landscape.

The storytellers who retold the story of Noah constructed a dramatic account and a story that could be absorbing, found in Genesis 6-9.

The story of Noah and the flood is part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Flood symbolises God's punishment for the wickedness in the world.

Whilst the Genesis account of the flood may not be factually correct in every detail, it does not mean that a devastating flood did not occur. Even a relatively small flood can cost lives and destroy livestock and property. When these stories are retold, they can grow dramatically. It should not be surprising that many cultures have flood stories!

Reading the Genesis account of the Flood, it is helpful to look for the meaning behind the story rather than ponder too much about how factual the details are, the truth behind the story lies in its meaning and how people understood the story.

When the flood subsided, and the ark came to rest in the mountains of Ararat (Genesis 8:4), through the Genesis account we see the start of a new relationship between God and the human race. The water subsides and a rainbow appears.

I set my rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters

The flood in
Leintwardine,
Herefordshire
July 2007

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shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” Genesis 9:13-16
New King James Version

A rainbow needs water, droplets gliding in the atmosphere and the sunlight shining through the droplets of water to form the beautiful arc of Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet. The image complemented by the return of the dove (Genesis 8:10). The story ends with a divine covenant when ‘. . . the LORD said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination^[a] of man’s heart *is* evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.’ (Genesis 8:21)

The story is a reminder of the destructive power of water, it also has a warning for us today as we experience changes in the climate and see the effects of flooding through news and social media.

So, to our time of reflection:



Nevit Dilmen
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Time for a break!

Over the next few weeks, we will be reflecting on water. For many of us in northern Europe with have an abundance of water, for others it is the opposite. There can be a tendency to take things for granted until they are not there. So . . .

Let us remember that the Lord is here, and His Spirit is with us, washing away the dust and grime of our lives. His Spirit is poured out on all who thirst.

Slowly pour out a glass of water

Hear the water as it flows into the glass.

Find your favourite space for this time of prayerful reflection

Place the glass of water on a table and light a candle.

Slow down, breathe calmly, be comfortable and relax.

Be still and know that I am God. (Click the link to listen)

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/dbBImzfVy94?si=HVERF1hNJ9IQNRWwv&t=3>

The words of the hymn appear on the screen via the YouTube link.

Our reading from Genesis

. . . the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf *was* in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore. (Genesis 8:11-12)

The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth." And God said to Noah, "This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* on the earth." (Genesis 9:16-17)

Let us pause and reflect on

Creator of covenant
whose promise to us still holds
we turn to you in our vulnerability
as the waters of fear
trouble our societies and our politics.

Remember us, we pray
Re-create, renew us, restore us
Give us courage to prevail
Against floods of doubt and
uncertainty.

Bring us to a new relationship with
Earth
And with each other
Mindful of our interdependence
And our God given responsibility.
(Barbara Glasson – Reflections on the Water)



When asked about how to pray Jesus gave these simple but profound words, so let them be our prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord, in the name of Christ Amen

Fr Derek Akker

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(Derek is a retired Anglican Parish Priest and a member of the congregations of All Saints & St James. Prior to his ordination he was accredited as a Methodist Preacher in 1968 and served within the Methodist Church until returning to the Anglican Church in the mid 1980's)

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Image - Impact of a drop of water. Featured picture, Picture of the year, Picture of the day
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